

R277. Education, Administration.

R277-502. Educator Licensing and Data Retention.

R277-502-1. Authority and Purpose.

- (1) This rule is authorized by:
 - (a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3, which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board;
 - (b) Section 53A-1-401, which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law; and
 - (c) Section 53A-6-104, which gives the Board power to issue licenses.
- (2) This rule specifies the types of license levels and license areas of concentration available and procedures for obtaining a license, required for employment as a licensed educator in the public schools of Utah.
- (3) This rule also provides a process and criteria for educators whose licenses have lapsed to return to the teaching profession.

R277-502-2. Definitions.

- (1) "Accredited school" means a public or private school that:
 - (a) meets standards essential for the operation of a quality school program; and
 - (b) has received formal approval through a regional accrediting association.
- (2) "Comprehensive Administration of Credentials for Teachers in Utah Schools or "CACTUS" means the electronic file maintained on all licensed Utah educators including information such as:
 - (a) personal directory information;
 - (b) educational background;
 - (c) endorsements;
 - (d) employment history; and
 - (e) a record of disciplinary action taken against the educator.
- (3) "LEA" includes, for purposes of this rule, the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.
 - (4) "Letter of Authorization" means a designation given to an individual employed by an LEA for one year authorizing the individual to teach in a public school, such as:
 - (a) an out-of-state candidate; or
 - (b) an individual pursuing an alternative license, who has not completed the requirements for a Level 1, 2, or 3 license; or
 - (c) an individual who has not completed necessary endorsement requirements.
 - (5)(a) "License areas of concentration" means designations to licenses obtained by completing a Board-approved educator preparation program or an alternative preparation program in a specific area of educational studies to include the following:
 - (i) Early Childhood (k-3);
 - (ii) Elementary (k-6);
 - (iii) Elementary (1-8);
 - (iv) Middle (5-9), only for licenses issued before 1988;
 - (v) Secondary (6-12);
 - (vi) Administrative/Supervisory (k-12);
 - (vii) Career and Technical Education;
 - (viii) School Counselor;
 - (ix) School Psychologist;

- (x) School Social Worker;
- (xi) Special Education (k-12);
- (xii) Preschool Special Education (Birth-Age 5);
- (xiii) Communication Disorders;
- (xiv) Speech-Language Pathologist; and
- (xv) Speech-Language Technician.

(b) License areas of concentration may also bear endorsements relating to subjects or specific assignments.

(6)(a) "License endorsement" or "endorsement" means a specialty field or area earned through completing required course work established by the Superintendent or through demonstrated competency approved by the Superintendent.

(b) An endorsement shall be listed on a professional educator license indicating the specific qualifications of the holder.

(7) "Professional learning plan" means a plan developed by an educator in collaboration with the educator's supervisor, consistent with R277-500, which details appropriate professional learning activities for the purpose of renewing the educator's license.

(8) "Renewal" means reissuing or extending the length of a license consistent with R277-500.

(9) "State Approved Endorsement Program" or "SAEP" means a plan developed between the Superintendent and a licensed educator to direct the completion of endorsement requirements by the educator consistent with Section R277-520-11.

R277-502-3. Program Approval and Requirements.

(1) The Superintendent shall accept educator license recommendations from educator preparation programs that have applied for Board approval and have met the requirements described in this Rule R277-502 and the Standards for Program Approval established in:

- (a) Rule R277-504;
- (b) Rule R277-505; or
- (c) Rule R277-506.

(2) The Superintendent may establish deadlines and uniform forms and procedures for all aspects of program licensing.

(3) To be approved for license recommendation an educator preparation program shall:

(a) have a physical location in Utah where students attend classes or if the program provides only online instruction:

- (i) have the program's primary headquarters located in Utah; and
- (ii) be licensed to do business in Utah through the Utah Department of Commerce;

(b) include coursework designed to ensure that the educator is able to meet the Utah Effective Educator Standards established in R277-530;

(c) include coursework, if the program offers content endorsement preparation, that is, at minimum, equivalent to the course requirements for the endorsement as established by the Superintendent;

(d) establish entry requirements designed to ensure that only high quality individuals enter the licensure program, including the following minimum components:

- (i) a minimum high school or college GPA of 3.0;

(ii) a Board-cleared fingerprint background check; and at least one of the following:
(iii)(A) a passing score on a Board-approved basic skills test;
(B) an ACT composite score of 21 with a verbal/English score no less than 20 and a mathematics/quantitative score of no less than 19; or
(C) a combined SAT score of 1000 with neither mathematics nor verbal below 450;
and

(e) include a student teaching or intern experience that meets the requirements detailed in Rules R277-504, R277-505, and R277-506.

(4) An institution may waive any of the entrance requirements provided in Subsection (3)(d) based on program established guidelines for no more than 10 percent of an entrance cohort.

(5) The Superintendent shall lead the approval review for any Board-approved educator preparation program seeking to maintain or receive program approval.

(6) The Superintendent shall be responsible for:

(a) observing and monitoring the approval review process;
(b) reviewing subject specific programs to determine if the program meets state standards for licensure in specific areas;

(c) reviewing program procedures to ensure that Board requirements for licensure are followed; and

(d) reviewing licensure candidate files to determine if the program followed Board requirements for licensure.

(7) After completion of the approval review site visit, a Board-approved educator preparation program, working with the Superintendent, shall prepare and submit a program approval request for consideration by the Board that includes:

(a) a program summary;
(b) approval review findings;
(c) program areas of distinction;
(d) program enrollment; and
(e) program goals and direction.

(8) If the program approval request is approved by the Board, the program shall be considered Board-approved until the next scheduled approval review visit.

(9)(a) Notwithstanding Subsection 8, the Superintendent may place a program on probation for:

(i) failure to meet program requirements detailed in applicable Board rules; and
(ii) submission of inadequate or incomplete information in a report required under this R277-502.

(b) The Board may revoke its approval of a probationary program that fails to meet probationary requirements with at least one year's notice.

(10) If a new educator preparation program seeks Board approval or a previously Board-approved educator preparation program seeks approval for additional license area preparation and endorsements, the program shall submit an application to the Superintendent including:

(a) information detailing the exact license areas of concentration and endorsements that the program intends to award;

(b) detailed course information, including required course lists, course descriptions, and course syllabi for all courses that will be required as part of a program;

(c) detailed information showing how the required coursework will ensure that the

educator satisfies all standards in the Utah Effective Educator Standards established in Rule R277-530 and Professional Educator Standards established in Rule R277-515;

(d) information about program timelines and anticipated enrollment.

(11) The Board shall approve applications for new educator preparation programs.

(12)(a) The Superintendent shall review and approve applications from previously Board-approved educator preparation programs desiring Board approval for additional license areas and endorsements.

(b) The Superintendent may grant preliminary approval pending Utah State Board of Regents approval of a new program if the program is within a public institution.

(13) An educator preparation program seeking Board approval may apply to the Board for probationary approval for a maximum of three years contingent on the completion of the approval process.

(14) A Board-approved educator preparation program shall submit an annual report to the Superintendent by July 1 of each year, which shall include the following:

(a) student enrollment counts designated by anticipated license area of concentration and endorsement and disaggregated by gender and ethnicity;

(b) information explaining any significant changes to course requirements or course content;

(c) the program's response to areas of concern or areas of focus identified by the Superintendent;

(d) information regarding any program-determined areas of concern or areas of focus and the program's planned response; and

(e) a summary explanation of students admitted under the waiver identified in Subsection (4) and an explanation of the waiver.

(15) The Superintendent shall provide reporting criteria to Board-approved educator preparation programs regarding the annual report and designated areas of concern or focus by January 31 annually.

(16) An individual that completes a Board-approved educator preparation program may be recommended for licensure within five years of program completion if the individual meets current licensing requirements.

(17)(a) If five years have passed since an individual completed a Board-approved preparation program, the individual may be recommended for licensure following review by the individual program.

(b) The preparation program officials shall determine whether any content or pedagogy coursework previously completed meets current program standards and if additional coursework, hours or other activities are necessary to recommend licensure.

(c) The individual shall complete all work required by program officials before receiving a license recommendation from the program.

R277-502-4. License Levels, Procedures, and Periods of Validity.

(1)(a) The Superintendent shall recommend an individual to the Board for a Level 1 license if the individual:

(i) is recommended by a Board-approved educator preparation program or approved alternative preparation program; or

(ii) possesses a valid professional educator license from another state.

(b) An LEA and Board-approved educator preparation program shall cooperate in preparing candidates for a Level 1 license and may use joint resources to assist candidates

in preparation for licensing.

(c) A Board-approved educator preparation program may only issue a recommendation if the individual has satisfactorily completed the programs of study required for the preparation of educators and has met licensing standards in the license areas of concentration for which the individual is recommended.

(2) A Level 1 license is valid for three years unless suspended or revoked for cause by the Board.

(3) A license applicant who has received or completed license preparation activities or coursework inconsistent with this rule may present compelling information and documentation for review and approval by the Superintendent to satisfy the licensing requirements.

(4) If an educator has taught for three years in a K-12 public education system in Utah, the Superintendent may only recommend renewal of a Level 1 license if:

(a) the employing LEA has requested a one year extension consistent with Section R277-522-4; or

(b) the individual has continuous experience as a speech language pathologist in a clinical setting.

(5) The Superintendent shall recommend a Level 1 licensee to the Board for a Level 2 license upon:

(a) satisfaction of all Board requirements for the Level 2 license; and

(b) the recommendation of the employing LEA.

(6) An LEA shall make a recommendation under Subsection (5)(b), prior to the expiration of the educator's Level 1 license and following:

(a) the completion of three years of successful, professional growth and educator experience;

(b) satisfaction of all requirements of Rule R277-522; and

(c) any additional requirements imposed by the employing LEA.

(7) A Level 2 license shall be valid for five years unless suspended or revoked for cause by the Board.

(8) A Level 2 license may be renewed for successive five year periods consistent with Rule R277-500.

(9) The Superintendent shall recommend a Level 2 licensee to the Board for a Level 3 license who:

(a) has current National Board Certification;

(b) has a doctorate in education in a field related to a content area in a unit of the public education system or an accredited private school; or

(c) holds a Speech-Language Pathology area of concentration and has a current American Speech-Language Hearing Association certification.

(10) A Level 3 license is valid for seven years unless suspended or revoked for cause by the Board.

(11) A Level 3 license may be renewed for successive seven year periods consistent with Rule R277-500.

(12) The Superintendent may establish deadlines and uniform forms and procedures for all aspects of licensing.

(13)(a) All licenses expire on June 30 of the year of expiration and may be renewed any time after January of the same year.

(b) Responsibility for license renewal rests solely with the licensee.

R277-502-5. Professional Educator License Areas of Concentration, and Endorsements and Under-Qualified Employees.

(1) Unless excepted under rules of the Board, to be employed in a public school in a capacity covered by a license area of concentration set forth in Subsection R277-502-2(6)(a), a person shall hold a valid license issued by the Board in the respective license area of concentration.

(2) An educator who is licensed and holds the appropriate license area of concentration but who is working out of the educator's endorsement area, shall:

(a) submit an SAEP to complete the requirements of an endorsement to the Superintendent; or

(b) request, along with the educator's employing LEA, a letter of authorization from the Board if the educator has not completed requirements for an area of concentration or endorsement.

(3)(a) A letter of authorization issued under Subsection (2)(b) is valid for one year.

(b) An educator may receive no more than three Letters of Authorization throughout the educator's employment in Utah schools.

(c) The Superintendent may recommend an exception to the limitation in Subsection (3)(b) on a case by case basis following specific approval of the request by the educator's employing LEA governing board.

(d) A letters of authorization approved prior to the 2000-2001 school year shall not be counted towards the limit in Subsection (3)(b).

(e) If an educator's letter of authorization expires before the individual is approved for licensing, the educator falls into under-qualified status.

(4) A licensed educator may receive an endorsement to indicate qualification in a subject or content area.

(a) An LEA shall recognize a STEM endorsement as a minimum of 16 semester hours of university credit toward lane change on the LEA's salary schedule.

(b) The Superintendent shall determine the courses and experiences necessary for a STEM endorsement.

(c) The Superintendent shall determine which content area endorsements qualify as STEM endorsements.

(5) An endorsement is not valid for employment purposes without a current license and license area of concentration.

R277-502-6. Returning Educator Relicensure.

(1) A previously licensed educator with an expired license may renew an expired license upon satisfaction of the following:

(a) Completion of a criminal background check including review of any criminal offenses and clearance in accordance with Rule R277-214;

(b) Employment by an LEA;

(c) Completion of a one-year professional learning plan developed jointly by the educator's school principal or charter school director and the returning educator consistent with R277-500 that also considers the following:

(i) previous successful public school teaching experience;

(ii) formal educational preparation;

(iii) period of time between last public teaching experience and the present;

(iv) school goals for student achievement within the employing school and the

educator's role in accomplishing those goals;

(v) returning educator's professional abilities, as determined by a formal discussion and observation process completed within the first 30 days of employment; and

(vi) completion of additional necessary professional development for the educator.

(d) Filing of the professional learning plan within 30 days of hire;

(e) Successful completion of required Board-approved exams for licensure;

(f) Satisfactory experience as determined by the LEA with a trained mentor; and

(g) Submission to the Superintendent of the completed and signed Return to Original License Level Application, available on the Board website prior to June 30 of the school year in which the educator seeks to return.

(2) A returning educator is eligible for renewal of an educator license following completion of a professional learning plan notwithstanding the license renewal point requirements of Section R277-500-3.

(3)(a) A returning educator who previously held a Level 2 or Level 3 license under this rule shall receive a Level 1 license during the first year of employment following renewal of an expired license.

(b) Upon completion of the requirements listed in Subsection (1) and a satisfactory LEA evaluation, the employing LEA may recommend the educator's return to Level 2 or Level 3 licensure.

(4) A returning educator who taught less than three consecutive years in a public or accredited private school shall complete the requirements of Rule R277-522 before being recommended by an LEA to move from a Level 1 to Level 2 license.

R277-502-7. Professional Educator License Reciprocity.

(1) The Superintendent shall act in accordance with the requirements of the Compact for Interstate Qualification of Educational Personnel under Section 53A-6-201, et seq.

(2) A Level 1 license may be issued to an individual holding a professional educator license in another state who has completed preparation equivalent to Board-approved standards and who has completed Board-approved testing, as required by Subsection R277-503-3(4).

(3) If an out-of-state applicant has three or more continuous years of previous educator experience in a public or accredited private school, a Level 2 license may be issued upon the recommendation of the employing Utah LEA after at least one year.

(4) If an out-of-state applicant has less than three years of previous educator experience in a public or accredited private school, a Level 2 license may be issued following satisfaction of the requirements of Rule R277-522.

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